

# **Education and Workforce Development Cabinet**

# **Gov. Beshear awards Kentucky Work Ready Communities**

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## **Contact Information:**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 21, 2013)** – Governor Steve Beshear announced today that Madison and Shelby counties have been certified as Kentucky Work Ready Communities and Bullitt, Nelson, McLean and Webster counties have achieved Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress.

The Kentucky Work Ready Communities certification program from the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (KWIB) and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet assures employers that a local workforce has the talent and skills necessary to staff existing jobs and to master the innovative technologies new jobs will require.

“Congratulations to Madison and Shelby counties for achieving Kentucky Work Ready Communities status,” said Gov. Beshear. “This designation shows employers that a county has completed rigorous requirements and is a cut above other communities nationally when it comes to developing a skilled labor force. I encourage all Kentucky communities to strive for the Kentucky Work Ready Communities designation.”

To become certified, a county must gather local support and commitment and apply for the Work Ready Community designation. Counties have to meet criteria in six areas including high school graduation rate, National Career Readiness Certificate holders, demonstrated community commitment, educational attainment, soft-skills development and digital literacy.

In addition to Madison and Shelby, the counties of Boyle, Daviess, Warren, Woodford and Henderson have been designated as Kentucky Work Ready Communities since certification began in February 2012.

“The Kentucky Work Ready Communities program momentum is growing as more communities learn about the certification and how it can help them achieve a higher level of competitiveness among business and industry,” said Ed Holmes, chair of KWIB. “In addition to the 30 counties that have achieved certification as Work Ready or Work Ready in Progress, another 48 are working on applications.”

“We are excited to designate Bullitt, Nelson, McLean and Webster as Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress, and we look forward to certifying many others in the future,” said Crystal Gibson, chair of the Kentucky Work Ready Communities Review Panel and vice president of Public Affairs at Citigroup. “Working toward the Kentucky Work Ready

Communities status gives communities an economic advantage when companies are looking for a place to locate, and it shows established Kentucky businesses that they will continue to have a strong pipeline of skilled workers in the future.”

Currently, 23 counties have been designated as Kentucky Work Ready Communities in Progress because they are close to meeting the Kentucky Work Ready Community criteria. To achieve this level, a county must present a viable plan to meet all of the criteria within three years. The designation shows that a community is making strides and working with its business, education, workforce and economic development leaders to set and meet common goals that will give the county an economic edge.

Applications for the certification were reviewed by a panel appointed by the KWIB. The panel recommended certification by the board for the counties that met the criteria. The panel meets four times a year to review applications, which can be submitted at any time.

For more information about the Kentucky Work Ready Communities program, go to <http://workready.ky.gov>.